



# Food, family fun and fitness

By Joey Aguilar  
Staff Reporter

It may be less thrilling and exciting compared to the "Dine in the Sky", but the "Barbeque Donut Flotilla/Tea on the Sea" takes people on a relaxing boat ride with family and friends at the Qatar International Food Festival at the Museum of Islamic Art.

If the "Dine in the Sky" offered an opportunity to see the skyline of a busy city while eating suspended from a platform high above, the 30-minute ride simply gives guests time to rest in a comfortable capsule.

"And it is affordable at QR50 per person," said Joseph Yammine, executive chef and director of Operation for Food and Beverage of The Diplomatic Club.

He told *Gulf Times* that they were offering a promo of QR230 per person for the dinner. For the tea/coffee on the sea, they serve Arabic coffee and British tea which is part of celebrating 20 years of Qatar-UK relations.

In the past three days at the festival, he said they were fully booked and many Qataris and expatriates brought their families with them. The food is served by a cook/waiter while another person drives the boat.

"It's very popular now and it is full everyday," said Yammine, adding that it is the first time they joined the festival.

"They use only two boats even at The Diplomatic Club and people can book for 1 to 2 1/2 hours. Separate fees are charged for the rental and the food. It can be rented privately by a minimum of two and a maximum of eight persons.

Aside from barbeque and salad, they also serve sea food and other food depending on the group's preference.

The charges are QR180 for food and QR450 for renting a boat for one hour.

"There are a lot of things you can do. It is something out of the book," he noted.

Meanwhile, a London-based

company known as Fitness With Food engages children into a more sporty activity.

While many are busy eating a variety of international and local cuisine, trainer Haitham Khalid keeps children busy with what he described as basic functional fitness.

It is about doing practical exercises in a fun way that will encourage people to do it regularly. "And also these exercises will help you in your everyday life," he said.

Khalid, who has been a chef in London for 10 years and has worked in different hotels, also teaches people how to exercise properly and eat the right food.

"If you are exercising a lot and eating the wrong foods, it can be damaging to your health which causes diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol - leading to overweight," he said. "It's about education towards fitness and food."

He admits that training kids is not easy because they don't have a long concentration span. Dealing with them should take a while "but many have become interested especially when they see others doing the exercise."

Wyndham Grand Regency Hotel impressed visitors to the festival with its Chopsticks restaurant.

"It is a great chance for whole family to sample and enjoy several cuisines from around the world," said food and beverage director Eman Abela.

Wyndham Grand Regency has served many VIP events in the four-day festival.

Thousands of visitors have been pouring into the 4th Qatar International Food Festival (QIFF), organisers said.

Qatar Tourism Authority (QTA) and Qatar Airways partnered on QIFF this year making it one of the most successful in its history. The festival, which offers up plenty of food, family fun and entertainment ends today.

Entry to the event is free. Vouchers for food and drinks are being sold at the venue. Opening hours today 2pm-10pm.



The donut team



Sunset brings a perfect moment for guests in a donut-shaped capsule at the Qatar International Food Festival yesterday. PICTURES: Joey Aguilar



Dining in the Sky- a rare experience



Fun in kids zone.



Haitham Khalid keeps children busy at the food festival



The Dine in the Sky facility at the food festival.



The Wyndham Grand Regency team.



An aerial view of the festival.